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High-level Political Signing Conference for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto

Palermo, Italy, 12-15 December 2000

Information for participants

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I. Background

1. In its resolution 53/111 of 9 December 1998, the General Assembly decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc committee for the purpose of elaborating a comprehensive international convention against transnational organized crime and three additional international legal instruments. The text of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto were elaborated during eleven sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, held between 19 January 1999 and 27 October 2000. The Convention and the protocols thereto approved by the Ad Hoc Committee were to be adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 54/129 of 17 December 1999, accepted the offer of the Government of Italy to host a high-level political signing conference in Palermo for the purpose of signing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention) and the protocols thereto. The Assembly invited all States to be represented at the Conference at the highest possible levels of government.

II. Date and venue

3. The High-level Political Signing Conference for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention) and protocols thereto will be held in Palermo, Italy, from 12 to 15 December 2000.

III. Opening of the Conference and seating arrangements

4. The formal opening of the High-level Signing Conference will take place on Tuesday, 12 December 2000, at 10.00 a.m., at the Teatro Massimo, Piazza Verdi, 90100 Palermo. Delegates are requested to be in their seats by 9.45 a.m. All other plenary sessions of the Conference will be held at the Palazzo di Giustizia, Piazza Vittorio Emmanuele Orlando, 90100 Palermo, from the afternoon of Tuesday, 12 December to Friday, 15 December 2000. The programme of meetings will be printed in the daily Journal, giving details about the daily activities and information such as titles, times and locations of meetings, agenda items to be considered and relevant documentation.

5. The first plenary meeting of the Conference, on Tuesday, 12 December 2000, will be devoted to the opening ceremony and the consideration of organizational matters, such as the adoption of rules of procedure and the election of officers. It is standard practice at United Nations conferences hosted by a Member State to elect a representative of the host country as President of the Conference. At the second and subsequent plenary meetings, Government representatives will address the Conference.

6. At the opening of the Conference (Teatro Massimo), the delegation of each State will be assigned at least four seats. At subsequent sessions of the plenary (Plenary Hall), the delegation of each State will be assigned three seats, one at the table plus two in the row behind. Specifically identified seating facilities will be available for other participants in the Conference.

7. The following timetable is proposed for the plenary sessions: morning session: 10.00 a.m. to 1 p.m; afternoon session: 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

IV. Organization of work

A. Signature of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto

8. Heads of State or Government and ministers for foreign affairs are recognized as authorized to sign the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto without having to present full powers. Any other official wishing to sign must first present full powers, issued by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State concerned, naming the official and the Convention and any protocol thereto to be signed and duly authorizing the official to sign the instrument (see attached form in annex I). The full powers for the signature of the Convention in Palermo shall be submitted to the Legal Officer representing the depositary at the Conference, who will be available from 8 December 2000 until the closure of the Conference.

B. Statements

9. Statements made by representatives during the plenary sessions will be limited to 10 minutes.

10. Delegations wishing to have their statements circulated to all participants are requested to provide a minimum number of 300 copies to the Secretariat, for circulation in the languages and quantities received. The availability of reproduction facilities for delegations at the Conference site cannot be guaranteed, and it is strongly recommended that sufficient quantities be made available at the Conference venue by delegations.

C. List of speakers

11. A list of speakers for the plenary session will be opened at the United Nations Office at Vienna, Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (contact person: Ms. Renate Weidinger, Vienna International Centre, Room D-1438, telephone: + (43) (1) 26060-4057, facsimile: + (43) (1) 26060-5885) as of 1 December 2000. The list of speakers will be closed in Palermo, at 12 noon, on Wednesday, 13 December 2000, upon approval of the President and the bureau of the Conference.

V. Side events

12. To provide an opportunity for delegations to discuss matters related to the Convention and the protocols thereto, in particular the follow-up activities to ensure their effective implementation, as envisaged by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/129, the Government of Italy, assisted by the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, will organize the following side events:

(a) Symposium on Rule of Law in the Global Village, scheduled to take place at Palazzo dei Normanni, Piazza della Vittoria, 90100 Palermo, from the afternoon of Tuesday, 12 December 2000, to the morning of Thursday, 14 December 2000;

(b) Forum for Global Action against Trafficking in Persons, scheduled to take place at Palazzo Biscari, Via Museo Biscari, 95100 Catania, on 14 December 2000 (transport to be provided for official delegations);

(c) Seminar on Transnational Organized Crime and the Media, scheduled to take place at Palazzo dei Normanni, Piazza della Vittoria, 90100 Palermo, on 13 December 2000.

13. In the context of its cultural initiatives the Municipality of Palermo will organize, in consultation with the United Nations, an event to discuss topics related to the Convention and the protocols thereto, to be held at Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa, Piazza della Zisa, 90100 Palermo, on 14 December 2000.

VI. Participation

14. The following categories of participants will take part in the Conference:

(a) Representatives of States, officially designated by their Government, the credentials for whom are to be issued by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs;

(b) Observers designated by organizations that have received a standing invitation from the General Assembly to participate in its sessions and work;

(c) Observers designated by regional intergovernmental organizations and other interested international bodies;

(d) Observers designated by non-governmental organizations, participating actively in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, with due regard to the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, section VII, of 25 July 1996, and, in particular, to the relevance of their activities to the work of the Conference;

(e) Experts invited to the Conference in their individual capacity.

VII. Registration of participants

A. Credentials of representatives

15. The credentials (full name, title, address and facsimile) of representatives and the names of members of each delegation participating in the Conference should be submitted either to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna not less than one week before the opening of the Conference (1 December 2000) or to the Secretary of the Conference in Palermo between 8 and 11 December 2000.

16. The contact address for the Director-General is:

Mr. Pino Arlacchi
Director-General of the United Nations
Office at Vienna
c/o Mr. Jonathan Lucas
Secretary of the Conference
Vienna International Centre
P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria
Facsimile: + (43) (1) 26060-5885

17. It is recommended that a credentials committee of nine members be appointed by the Conference on the proposal of the President. Its membership, as far as possible, should be the same as that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its fifty-fifth session.

18. The Credentials Committee of the Conference should itself elect from among the representatives of participating States a chairman and such other officers as it considers necessary. The Credentials Committee should examine the credentials of representatives participating in the Conference and report thereon to the Conference.

B. Registration and grounds passes

19. Admission to the Conference premises will require the presentation of grounds passes. For reasons of security, grounds passes must be worn at all times while on the Conference premises. All participants in the Conference are therefore required to register in the Conference registration area located at the Palazzo di Giustizia, Building L (entrance Via del Noviziato/Via Giovan Battista Pagano).

20. Registration will begin on Sunday, 10 December 2000, at 4 p.m., and the desk will remain open until 7 p.m. The registration desk will be open on 11 December 2000, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on 12 December 2000, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For the remaining period of the Conference, the registration desk will be open from 8.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

21. To avoid waiting long periods upon registration on the morning of Tuesday, 12 December 2000, participants are strongly encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity for advance registration on Sunday, 10 December 2000, and Monday, 11 December 2000.

VIII. Official languages and documentation

22. The six official languages of the Conference are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Simultaneous interpretation into and from Italian will be available for the proceedings of the plenary and all other events. Statements made in a language of the Conference during the meetings of the plenary or the Symposium on Rule of Law in the Global Village will be interpreted into the other languages of the Conference. A representative may speak in a language other than the languages of the

Conference if he or she informs the Secretariat beforehand and provides for interpretation into one of the official languages of the Conference. Official documents of the Conference will be made available in the six languages of the Conference.

23. For two of the side events to be held in parallel with the Conference, namely the Forum for Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Seminar on Transnational Organized Crime and the Media, interpretation into and from English, French, Spanish and Italian will be provided.

24. The main document distribution counter will be located adjacent to the Plenary Hall. Each delegation will be assigned an individual box at the documents distribution counter in which all documents will be placed.

IX. Information and the media

25. A dedicated web site will be developed to provide general information on the Conference. Documents for the Conference will be posted on the following website: http://www.odccp.org/palermo

26. Daily press briefings by the spokesperson for the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna will be given during the Conference. Media representatives who would like to cover the Conference may request additional information from either of the following:

Mr. Sandro Tucci
Spokesperson for the Director-General
United Nations Office at Vienna
P.O. Box 500
A-1400 Vienna, Austria
Telephone: + (43) (1) 26060, ext. 4108
Facsimile: + (43) (1) 26060-5875
United Nations Information Centre,
Rome
Palazzetto Venezia
Piazza San Marco 50
00186 Rome
Italy
Telephone: + (39) (06) 678-9907
Facsimile: + (39) (06) 679-3337

27. The Press Centre established for the duration of the Conference will be located in a hall constructed specifically for the Conference in the area adjacent to the Palazzo di Giustizia. The Centre will include a press working area, documents distribution area for members of the media, photocopying and, on a commercial basis, telephone and facsimile facilities. Facilities for journalists for media coverage will also be provided at the Palazzo di Giustizia. Members of the media wishing to cover the Conference should apply for accreditation to:

Ms. Veronika Mayerhofer
United Nations Information Service,
Vienna
P.O. Box 500
A-1400 Vienna, Austria
Telephone: + (43) (1) 26060, ext. 3342
Facsimile: + (43) (1) 21346-3342
E-mail:
veronika.mayerhofer@unis.un.or.at

28. There will be a press accreditation counter at the Palazzo di Giustizia, Building L (entrance Via del Noviziato/Via Giovan Battista Pagano).

X. Visa requirements

29. Participants requiring visas are requested to contact the nearest Italian Consulate or Embassy or, if not available, the Consulate or Embassy of any other State participating in the Schengen Agreement and acting on behalf of Italy. The Government of Italy will facilitate the issuance of visas free of charge to the participants for whom they are required. States participating in the Schengen Agreement are: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Visa applications should be accompanied by a copy of the official invitation from the United Nations and other relevant information required for the issue of the visa. Visa applications should be submitted no later than three to four weeks prior to the date of departure. The following web site indicates the location of the nearest Italian Consulate or Embassy in each country: http://www.esteri.it/eng/thefarnesina/address/index.htm

XI. Welcome desk

30. The National Organizing Committee will have a welcome desk at the Falcone-Borsellino airport in Palermo where participants will be informed, inter alia, about arrangements for baggage handling and transport to hotels. Similar services will be available at the Linate/Malpensa airport in Milan and at the Fiumicino airport in Rome.

31. Delegations are requested to communicate their date, flight number and time of arrival as soon as possible to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cerimoniale Diplomatico della Repubblica, Piazzale della Farnesina 1, 00194 Rome, telephone: + (39) (06) 3691-2039, facsimile: + (39) (06) 3691-3401.

XII. Hotel reservations

32. The Italian National Organizing Committee has ensured the availability of a sufficient number of hotel rooms to accommodate Conference participants at reduced rates.

33. Hotel reservations should be requested exclusively from the Office of the Coordinator of the National Organizing Committee. Participants are therefore invited to complete the attached hotel reservation form (annex II), which can also be accessed at the following web site: http://www.governo.it/odccp (password m230765r). Completed forms should be sent to the Office of the Coordinator of the National Organizing Committee, Via della Ferratella in Laterano 51, Rome, Italy, telephone: + (39) (06) 777012, ext. 52 or 53 or 54, facsimile: + (39) (06) 7049-5455, not later than 4 November 2000.

34. A special shuttle bus service will provide transport between the Falcone-Borsellino airport in Palermo and all major hotels three days before and two days after the Conference. A shuttle bus service will also provide transport between the major hotels and all Conference premises in Palermo, including the sites where the side events will be held, as appropriate.

XIII. Facilities at the Conference site

A. Delegates' working area

35. A delegates' working area will be located at the Palazzo di Giustizia, C-Bulding (OE level). The area will include photocopying and, on a commercial basis, telephone and facsimile facilities.

B. Security

36. During the Conference, the Italian authorities will provide police protection and security outside the Conference premises. The United Nations Security and Safety Service will be responsible for security within the Conference premises. Specific requests regarding security arrangements on the Conference premises and related matters should be addressed to the Chief of the United Nations Security and Safety Service, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria, telephone: + (43) (1) 26060, ext. 3901, facsimile: + (43) (1) 26060-5834.

C. Medical facilities

37. The Government of Italy will provide medical facilities adequate for first aid and emergencies at the Palazzo di Giustizia, O-Building (OE level).

D. Eating facilities

38. Snack bars and other catering services will be available. All premises are located in the city centre, and the surrounding area offers a wide choice of restaurants and shops within a short walking distance.

39. The conference premises are a smoke-free environment. Smoking is only allowed in clearly designated areas in the delegates' lounges and coffee bars, where "Smoking permitted" signs will be displayed.

E. Banking and postal services

40. For the duration of the Conference, a bank (8.25 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and a post office (8 a.m. to

6 p.m.) will be opened at the Palazzo di Guistizia, O-Building (OE level).

F. Travel agency

41. A travel agency will be available at the Palazzo di Giustizia, O-Building (OE level), from 8.25 a.m. to 6 p.m.

42. The use of cellular telephones and laptop computers during meetings can be disruptive. Participants are requested to ensure that such equipment is switched off during meetings.

Annex I

Model of full powers (to be signed by the Head of State or Government, or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

Full powers

I, [name and title of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Head of Government or Head of State],

HEREBY AUTHORIZE, [name and title], to [sign * / ratify / denounce / effect the following declaration in respect of, etc.] the [title and date of treaty, convention, agreement, etc.] on behalf of the Government of [name of State].

Done at [place] on [date].

[Signature]

* Subject to the provisions of the treaty, one of the following alternatives is to be chosen: [subject to ratification] or [without reservation as to ratification]. Reservations made upon signature must be authorized by the full powers granted to the signatory.

Annex II*

Hotel reservation

PARTICIPANT**

Surname	First name		Title
Street	Zip code	City	Country
Institution			
Phone	Fax		e-mail
Name***	Relation***	Name***	Relation***

Please reserve a hotel room

Date of arrival: _____ Time of arrival: _____ Flight number_____

Date of departure: _____ Time of departure: _____ Flight number_____

Commercial flight ☐ Private flight ☐

Prices are in Euro/Lire, per room/per night with shower/wc, breakfast included

Mark the price range of your choice

Hotel		☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	De Luxe ☆☆☆	☆☆☆
Single	EURO/LIRE	170.43/330 000	98.13/190 000	67.14/130 000	56.81/110 000
Double	EURO/LIRE	170.43/330 000	139.44/270 000	98.13/190 000	77.47/150 000
Junior S.	EURO/LIRE	222.08/430 000			
Suite	EURO/LIRE	371.85/720 000	191.09/370 000	139.44/270 000	118.79/230 000

N.B. There is a limited number of single rooms; priority will be given to early bookings.

Other requests _____

☐ Check this box if you wish to participate in the Forum for Global Action against Trafficking in Persons, to be held in Catania, on 14 December 2000.

This includes:

Flight Palermo-Catania with aircraft arrangements made by the Office of the Coordinator of the National Organizing Committee (in the evening of 13 December 2000)

Hotel room in Catania to be paid by participants as appropriate (13 December 2000)

Flight Catania-Palermo (in the afternoon of 14 December 2000)

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* This annex has been reproduced without formal editing.

** Registration of Conference participants will start on Sunday, 10 December 2000, at 4 p.m. On Monday, 11 December 2000, at 6.30 p.m., there will be a concert of the Carabinieri band.

*** Names and relation of accompanying persons.

- Hotel reservations should be requested exclusively from the Office of the Coordinator of the National Organizing Committee. Please send this form, filled out with all the details required, by 4 November 2000, by fax + (39) (06) 7049-5455 or by e-mail http://www.governo.it/odccp (password m230765r).
- The Office of the Coordinator of the National Organizing Committee will inform you of the name and address of the hotel booked for you. At that time, in accordance with payment instructions indicated, advance payment of 25 per cent of the total amount due must be made not later than 18 November 2000. Once the room is booked, cancellation will entail the loss of the advance payment made to the hotel. Participants must settle the final bill before leaving the hotel.
- Participants from countries where the reciprocity principle is in force should send relevant proof together with the money transfer in order to be exempted from value added tax.